



IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in this application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A microwave cooking tray, comprising:
a base having at least two compartments, each compartment having a bottom surface defining a bottom surface pattern, the bottom surface of one of said compartments defining a first bottom surface pattern having a plurality projections and a bottom surface of a second of said compartments defining a second bottom surface pattern, wherein said first and second bottom surface patterns are distinct from each other and each designed for optimal cooking of a particular type of food product, further wherein said first and second bottom surface patterns are selected from the group consisting of a flat pattern, a ribbed pattern, a sinusoidal pattern, and a pyramidal pattern; and
a covering secured to said base and sealing each compartment.
2. (Canceled)
3. (Currently Amended) The microwave cooking tray as recited in claim [[2]] 1, wherein said covering is selected from the group consisting of a rigid snap-on lid, a film, and a vacuum pack bag.
4. (Currently Amended) The microwave cooking tray as recited in claim [[2]] 1, and further comprising at least one steam operated vent associated with each compartment, each vent opening when a desired pressure within the associated compartment is reached.

5. (Currently Amended) A method for packaging food in a microwave cooking tray, comprising the steps of:

providing a tray comprising a base having at least two compartments,

placing a first food type in a first compartment having a bottom surface defining a first bottom surface pattern having a plurality of projections, wherein said first bottom surface pattern is designed for optimal cooking of the first food type;

placing a second food type in a second compartment having a bottom surface defining a second bottom surface pattern, wherein said second bottom surface pattern is designed for optimal cooking of the second food type and is distinct from said first bottom surface pattern, further wherein said first and second bottom surface patterns are selected from the group consisting of a flat pattern, a ribbed pattern, a sinusoidal pattern, and a pyramidal pattern; and

securing a covering to the base, thereby enclosing the food types within the compartments such that the food types may be cooked simultaneously in the tray, each food type being cooked in an optimal cooking environment.

6. (Canceled)

7. (Currently Amended) The method for packaging food in a microwave cooking tray as recited in claim [[6]] 5, wherein said covering is selected from the group consisting of a rigid snap-on lid, a flexible film seal, and a vacuum pack bag.

8. (Previously Presented) The method for packaging food in a microwave cooking tray as recited in claim 5, and further comprising the step of providing a predetermined degree of adhesive power between each compartment and the covering such that a desired pressure within each compartment is reached before steam operated venting occurs.

9. (New) A microwave cooking tray, comprising:

a base having a plurality of compartments, each compartment having a bottom surface, the bottom surface of said first compartment having a plurality of first projections arranged in a first bottom surface pattern, the bottom surface of said second compartment having a plurality of second projections arranged in a second bottom surface pattern, wherein each of said first projections has a shape distinct from a shape of each of said second projections; and
a covering secured to said base and sealing each compartment.

10. (New) The microwave cooking tray as recited in claim 9, wherein said first and second bottom surface patterns are selected from the group consisting of a flat pattern, a ribbed pattern, a sinusoidal pattern, and a pyramidal pattern.

11. (New) The microwave cooking tray as recited in claim 9, and further comprising at least one steam operated vent associated with each compartment, each vent opening when a desired pressure within the associated compartment is reached.